PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

Christianity and Society

- **The French Do Not Like Us**
  The Roots of the Anti-American Sentiment in France
  Reinhold Niebuhr

- **A New Experiment in Churchmanship**
  A Report on Parishfield, Brighton, Michigan
  by the members of the Parishfield Community

- **Further Discussion of the Focus for Christian Action**
  Robert E. Fitch

- **Editorials**
- **Book Reviews**

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CHRISTIANITY and SOCIETY

EDITORIALS

The Predicament of American Power

Several months ago Secretary Dulles experienced the predicament of American power within one short week. At the beginning of the week he rigorously resisted Senator McCarthy's absurd effort to force the administration to compel our allies to give up East-West trade. The issue was crucial because some of our important allies would perish if they stopped trading with nations behind the iron curtain, and we would certainly become odious in the whole world if he forced them to a policy which did not meet with their approval. Incidentally, we have not considered the problems of Japanese trade with communist China seriously enough. With the cessation of war in Korea the economic problems of Japan have become acute; and they will not be solved if Japanese industry is denied access to its "hinterland" of Chinese markets. Dulles was on solid grounds, in other words, when he resisted McCarthy. Our moral prestige would be damaged even more seriously than McCarthy has damaged it throughout the world if we adopted his absurd policy of coercing our allies to follow a course they deemed contrary to their interests.

But before the week was up Secretary Dulles found himself in France and he threatened the French by implication with a possible withdrawal of American power from the Continent if they failed to ratify the European army agreement. Specifically he said that failure to ratify would prompt us to an "agonizing reappraisal" of our European commitments.

Dulles' actions at the end of the week seemed to be in flat contradiction of his words at the beginning. The contradiction was, of course, not quite so flat. The French were the authors of the idea of a European army. It is a brilliant idea for engaging German forces within the European defense community without running the danger of German aggression. But the German revival of economic strength was so stupendous and the political confusion in France so great that French people changed their minds; or were, at least, not so certain that the idea was a good one. Meanwhile we and the Germans had become thoroughly committed to the European army; and Secretary Dulles faced the problem of a hostile Congress if the French refused to play ball. What should he have done? His predicament proves that the perils and problems of our hegemonous power are indeed very great. We must not reduce our allies to become "satellites." But we cannot renounce the responsibilities of our power. Among them is the responsibility for the unification of European defence. Our only suggestion is that Mr. Dulles might have been more subtle in this, as in other ventures in diplomacy. He might have dropped a hint *sub rosa* rather than make a public statement. But, of course, a hint might have been published within a week by the anti-American press. Mr. Dulles may have been too obvious in his methods, but his seeming contradictions really revealed a permanent predicament of American power. Mr. Dulles might have lessened rather than aggravated the predicament if he had observed that his threat was an empty one because we are not in Europe for philanthropic reasons. Our mutual commitments are like the marriage relation; they cannot easily be changed, even if one of the partners to the covenant proves himself unstable.

R. N.

The Church and Foreign Policy

The Cleveland Conference on international relations was the first such conference held since the beginning of the Korean War and since the rise of the national hysteria associated with the intensification of the cold war. It was also the first national conference on this subject held under the auspices of the new National Council of Churches. The most important result of the conference was the demonstration that there is still among those who lead the thought of the churches a substantial consensus on international issues. It is significant that the important minority in such conferences is always a pacifist minority rather than a nationalist minority. There must be a great many Brickers in the churches but they do not have much influence on the thought of the churches.

The kind of nationalism of which Senator Bricker is a symbol is neutralized when issues are faced within the framework of Christian faith and in an ecumenical atmosphere. One hopes the truth lies there and that it is not merely that the internationalists know the ecclesiastical ropes better than the nationalists!

The Cleveland report emphasizes the things which are most often stressed in this journal. It recognizes the seriousness of the communist challenge to the "free world." It sees this in the context of the Asian revolution which is a much deeper phenomenon than communism and which communists seek to use and which they pervert. It stresses the importance of a constructive approach to the world conflict, an approach which keeps the military aspect of the conflict in a secondary position in comparison with its ideological and social aspects. It emphasizes the moral necessity of loyalty to the United Nations and the importance of developing within it real instruments of collective security. It gives strong support to foreign economic policies which are controlled by the interpendence of nations and which seek to help the so-called "underdeveloped nations" to improve their own standards of living. The sections of the report which deal with foreign economic policy and with collective security go quite far in spelling out programs of action. The conference took strong action in condemning by implication the Bricker Amendment or any action "which would hamper our government in carrying forward and making effective a responsible foreign policy."

One of the most significant actions of the conferences which came into the Message and into a specific resolution was the statement concerning "co-existence" and readiness for negotiations with the communist nations. The Message says: "The minimal basis for co-existence is the recognition on both sides that peace is better than armed conflict, especially when war threatens mutual annihilation." Such co-existence does not mean acquiescence to the "tyrannous cruelty" of the "Soviet power system" but any direct efforts to liberate peoples under communist rule by means of war would only pile new evils on the old. It is important for the churches to set themselves so strongly against the preventive-war or "extend-the-war" psychology, especially in view of the fact that so often such a policy is recommended on high moral grounds. At the same time the churches should recognize that there is a moral problem in negotiating with the captors of so many peoples. Because of the temper of the American public in regard to communism the churches need to put their emphasis on the arguments for a readiness to negotiate and on the self-defeating character of a dominantly military approach to the world conflict. It is unfortunate that within the churches, at Cleveland or anywhere else, there has been no real discussion of what seems to be our government's new view of strategy with its emphasis upon immediate atomic reprisals for any military move of the communists. This strategy runs the risk of turning any minor episode into a global atomic war in a few hours.

Mr. A. J. Muste in an article in *The Christian Century* criticized the Cleveland Conference because it seemed to put the Church's stamp of approval on the main lines of American foreign policy. Actually this approval of American policy is highly selective and the emphasis upon non-military or constructive factors is certainly far greater than in the case with our national policy. The conference does seek to develop a public opinion that will support an extension of the best in our national policy. Mr. Muste is right that for all of us who accept the fact of the cold war (or "cold peace") as an essential determinant of policy there is a real danger that we may be swept along too far by those in government with whom we are in partial agreement. The temptation of the pacifiist is to take too optimistic a view of the foe and it may well be that the temptation of the non-pacifist is to become too uncritical of American policy so long as it avoids the isolationist or "neo-isolationist" fallacies.

J. C. B.

Atomic Psychology

In December and January the Administration provided us with both a "new conception" for alleviating the atomic peril and a "new look" in foreign policy which contained threats of atomic reprisals. The "new conception," which envisages a world atomic pool to make fissionable fuel available to economically-underdeveloped countries for the development of power for domestic purposes, was bound to be interpreted as a stride in the direction of thawing the cold war. A generous estimate of the intent of this proposal sees it calculated to provide an opening wedge toward significant East-West discussion and cooperation in relation to the atomic peril and to dedicate some of the strength of the major powers "to serve the needs rather than the fears of mankind." However, even successful cooperation in such a limited venture provides nothing more than a wistful hope that it may give us practice for eventually cooperating in the much greater problem of control of atomic arms production. And for meeting the needs of mankind in underdeveloped areas, the traditional steam and hydro-electric power plants would be much sounder economically in practically every instance, especially if dual-purpose plants (plants capable of producing fissionable material as well as of using it) were not constructed. Thus the plan contains the inherent dangers of: (1) meeting economic needs uneconomically or extending the capacity to produce atomic weapons to some nations with unstable or corrupt governments, and (2) diverting attention from the real fears of mankind and producing a false sense of international concord while the stockpiling of atomic weapons proceeds unabated.

The "new look" which promises atomic reprisal to meet new military aggressions seems paradoxically counter-poised to this straining after a thread of international cooperation. The one is supposed to spring from our patience and forbearance in dealing with the Soviet bloc, and the other is an announcement of the limitations of our patience. More than a declaration that our patience can run out, the "new look" is to provide us with the means of meeting future aggression swiftly, economically, and with "mobility." But to commit ourselves to atomic reprisal is very immobile indeed, to say the least. In addition to frightening the rest of the world into greater anxiety about our power, it can only force us to two equally disastrous alternatives in the event of another "Korea": (1) to carry out our threat very likely precipitating a world-wide atomic holocaust, or (2) to decide "this is not the time" for such a reprisal, thus watching the free-world coalition slowly disappear behind the iron curtain.

In a sense both the atomic pool proposal and the atomic reprisal threat are strategies in psychological warfare intended to convince ourselves, our friends, and our foes of our desire for peace and our ability to devastate any violator of the peace. But at a deeper level they reveal the "psychological" mood of a nation and Administration

frantically trying to assume a "new leadership" but succeeding primarily in oscillating between illusion and despair, between impotence and a sense of omnipotence. If the Administration cannot raise that voice, someone *must* raise a voice which will call us to sobriety in estimating the problems we face and to courage to confront them. Surely the living Church ought to be mediating the Word of God which gives us the faith whose fruits are sobriety and courage as well as hope and love.

R. A. G.

Toward a Responsible Conservatism

We have speculated from time to time whether the Eisenhower victory would lead to the emergence of a "responsible conservatism" in American life. The criterion of responsibility would be the will and ability to confront the real domestic and foreign perils to which we are exposed and not merely parade the dogmas of traditional conservatism. The President's State of the Union message before Congress in January goes a long way in assuring the country that, as far as the President at least is concerned, he has the will and inclination to become the rallying point of such a conservatism. Whether he also has the political power and skill to push his program through a Congress which contains a strong element of "die-hards" is another question.

On domestic issues the President's position is a consistent middle-of-the-road policy. While he opposes socialized medicine, for instance, he proposes special help to the "chronically ill" and support for extant medical insurance systems by government reinsurance. That is probably a wise, moderate program. In the same way he wants to assume a modest responsibility for housing by the Federal government. The cherished *laissez faire* ideas of American conservatism are neatly rejected in his proposals and his promise to use every available resource of the government for the avoidance of a depression and the maintenance of full employment. His proposals for the farm problem may not bring the farmers back to the Republican fold. They are obviously off the reservation because of the effects of drought and falling prices. The farmers may in fact be penalized as the first segment of the population to suffer from lack of political support for their segment of the economy. But in principle Secretary Benson is certainly right in trying to rid our economy of supports so inflexible as to make inflation practically inevitable. For if there is no possibility of prices finding lower levels, the cumulative inflationary tendencies are bound to assert themselves.

It may be dubious whether the states will sanction the proposed Constitutional Amendment, lowering the voting age to eighteen years. But the President offers a cogent reason for the change; for the present arrangement means that men may be drafted before they can vote. But the ability to defend the country does not automatically endow young men with the wisdom to determine its political future.

The only concession by the President to "McCarthyism" in the party and country is the proposal to cancel the citizenship of those convicted for advocating overthrow of the government. Since the present laws provide for divesting convicted offenders of the rights of citizenship, it is difficult to know what is added or subtracted by the proposal. But symbolically the proposal satisfies the nation's abhorrence of communism. It also shocks our European friends and allies, particularly the Bristish who regard it as a return to "the past."

It will be interesting to observe the fate of the President's proposal in Congress. That will determine whether we have a party of reponsible conservatism or merely a lone hero, strayed from the moorings of our traditional conservatism. It was ominous that only the proposal for cancelling the citizenship of "traitors" won a very hearty approval in the Congress.

R. N.

Securing Insecurity

Few things in recent months have aggravated the general mood of internal insecurity of this nation as much as some of the frantic "security" measures which the Administration has acquiesced to, if not adopted. Brownell's luncheon-club "exposé" rather than lending an air of respectability to McCarthyism succeeded only in demonstrating that the Administration was willing to capitalize on the pseudopolitical advantage which demagoguery provides. Nor have the much-publicized but never-substantiated figures of the number of "security risks" "separated" from the Federal government by the Eisenhower "broom" convinced us that the Administration genuinely desires to be responsible about the country's internal security.

Now we are assured that the Attorney General, with the blessings of the President, will submit to Congress a program for strengthening the legal weapons for combating espionage and sabotage. The main features of this program will undoubtedly include measures for getting around the Fifth Amendment refuge and for giving legal status to "evidence" gained by wire-tapping. Perhaps there have been some misuses of the Fifth Amendment protection by persons "guilty" of nothing worse than a desire to frustrate congressional-investigation travesties of justice. In addition, the Fifth Amendment may have shielded a few actual conspirators. But there is little question that those who wish to get around the Fifth Amendment do so in order that perjury convictions may be obtained against offenders for whom conspiratoral crimes would be too hard to prove or to obtain a court conviction for under existing laws. Obviously to strip the Fifth Amendment of its intent and power to make the *accuser prove* his charges is too much to sacrifice in order that we may send a handful of spies to jail more easily. It should never be "easy" to convict a person of treason or conspiracy in a democracy; but if our laws provide too many loopholes for actual traitors or spies, the difficulties should be removed at the level of laws dealing with the definition of these crimes.

The proposals on wire-tapping attempt to deal at this level, but they are also ill-conceived. They would not only destroy the privacy of one of our most important means of personal communications and deepen suspicion and conformity; they would also endow even casual conversation with the status of evidence which could be used to convict a person of one of the most serious national crimes. While the absolute ethics of Jesus could blur the distinction between anger and murder, very neat discriminations must be made in the institutions of a healthy society between thought, intent, or even spoken words on the one hand, and committed acts on the other. While no case that is not of the devil can be made for admitting as evidence in a court of law information gained through wire-tapping, a case can be made for allowing extremely limited and responsibly exercised use of wire-tapping as a method of surveillance. The ADA's suggestion that a court injunction be required for such use and that it be permitted only in cases of espionage and treason and that heavy penalties be imposed for any other use seems sound. It may be wise to include in the prohibited use category instances in which the wire-tap is used but no formal charges are eventually brought in a court of law. This would provide a further safeguard against irresponsible use simply to gain "profitable" information. This added protection should not seem needless when one considers the growing tendency to misuse FBI files.

The coming Congressional debates on these new security measures loom crucial, especially since there is little evidence that the tide of wild accusation is being significantly stemmed. Recently a sincere and courageous civic leader spoke out against this tide and argued passionately that in a free, democratic society a man should have the right to face his accuser (in the President's own words) and be given the chance to *prove* that he is *innocent!*

R. A. G.

A Conflict Within the National Council of Churches

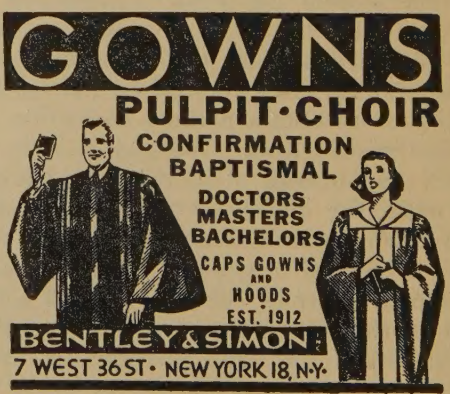
The National Council of Churches is having one of its periodic conflicts which come from the differences caused by the extreme conservatism of a group of laymen who in the early days of the Council were allowed to form an official committee under the chairmanship of Mr. J. Howard Pew. This committee, formed primarily for the purpose of securing financial support for the Council, has from time to time issued manifestos denouncing statements made by the Department of the Church and Economic Life. The most vocal members of this committee do not join in the discussion within the department but criticize it from the outside.

The Department of the Church and Economic Life last spring prepared a statement on Christian Principles and Assumptions on economic life. This statement had been worked over many times and had behind it the full support of at least fifty members of the Department, mostly lay men and lay women chosen from every important segment of the economy. It was presented to the General Board with the idea that the Board would adopt it in June of 1953. Before the General Board met to discuss the statement, Mr. Pew's committee met and passed a resolution condemning the statement totally and expressing its determination to oppose it at the coming meeting of the General Board. This opposition was so unqualified that it was considered wise strategy to withdraw the statement for the time being and present it at a later meeting of the Board.

This was done. Informal conferences between members of the Department and Mr. Pew's committee took place. The statement was slightly revised and sent up again to the General Board for action at its meeting in January of 1954. The attacks from Mr. Pew's committee were so insistent that the Executive Board of the Division of Christian Life and Work decided to withdraw the statement and submit it at a later meeting of the General Board, probably in March 1954. This decision was accepted by those who agreed with the statement on the ground that another two months' delay would enable some real misunderstandings to be cleared up with the more reasonable among the conservative critics. The attack upon the statement had been engineered by a small group of extremists whose minds will not be changed by delay or discussion. But there are others who had joined the opposition with whom it seemed worth while to discuss the points of difference.

The National Council made a great mistake in allowing this laymen's committee to be set up in the first place outside all of the program units of the Council and in addition to the Council's regular departments of lay men and lay women. The Council needs to watch its step if it is going to allow this small group of conservative laymen to have the final word in the watering down of any statement that is under discussion. They do not represent the vast majority of laymen. On the whole, the National Council during the past three years has asserted its independence of this group of extremists who can never muster more than six votes in the General Board. The action of the General Board in March will offer one of the most important tests which the Council has so far faced.

J. C. B.



The French Do Not Like Us

The Roots of the Anti-American Sentiment in France

Reinhold Niebuhr

We are very unpopular all over the world; and our unpopularity is increasing rather than diminishing. This anti-American sentiment has become particularly virulent in France, where it has reached endemic proportions.

The opposition of all classes and parties to the execution of the Rosenbergs, convicted of being atom spies, marked a new height in France's anti-American sentiment. In the plea for the Rosenbergs, sent to President Eisenhower by a group of prominent French leaders including François Mauriac and Gabriel Marcel, the communist thesis of the innocence of the Rosenbergs was glibly taken for granted. Recently a French Catholic writer, reporting in an American Catholic journal, revealed how generally French Catholics not only shared this conviction, but also believed that the Rosenbergs were, like Dreyfus, the victims of anti-Semitism. All these evidences point to the remarkable success of communist propaganda even among non-communist and anti-communism Frenchmen. The most fantastic charges of this propaganda seemed to have lodged themselves generally in the minds of even the most anti-communist Frenchmen.

We might have expected from those who belong spiritually to our common community that they would preserve at least a healthy scepticism toward these rather flagrant charges. Why should the communist propaganda have had such special success in France, when its implausibilities are discounted in other parts of the free world? Perhaps the most basic cause of France's anti-Americanism is our involvement in the revival of Germany's economic strength, and, more recently, in the proposals for its rearmament. The French spoke ironically of General Clay, the architect of the German economic revival, as a "most successful German statesman." The inclusion of Germany in the European defense community was as inevitable as our efforts to restore her economy. But we were so precipitous in proposing German rearmament, and had failed so completely in preparing the way for this step by previous consultations with both France and Britain, that we unnecessarily added to the animus which may be regarded as a necessary by-product of our role of leadership in the free communities.

Malenkov, in his recent party congress speech, aimed at this sore point in Franco-American relations. He praised the rather moribund Soviet-Franco alliance as "the best way of preserving European security against a common foe: German militarism."

We might regard this problem as the inconvenient projection of recent history into our contemporary urgencies. The more probable interpretation is that, as a non-European power, we failed to take account of the force of Europe's historic memories and enmities. But the immediate question is not the extent of our responsibility for the French animus, but the various roots of the anti-American sentiment. A mood so wide and deep must naturally be the product of more than a single cause.

Some of the roots of the French resentment are cultural. The French exaggerate the resentments of a culturally rich but politically impotent European continent toward a powerful non-European nation, which was regarded as cultural backward and unformed in the days of its innocency; and which, in the days of its strength, is suspected of gaining its power through technical skills, won at the expense of its cultural life. On this level the European attitude toward us is somewhat analogous to the contempt which the cultured, but politically impotent, Greeks had for the

Roman masters. The Romans were probably "vulgar" by Greek standards; but undoubtedly the envy of the weak for the powerful and of the poor for the rich colored these judgments, whether in the ancient or the modern case. The cultural resentments of France are aggravated by the degree of its political impotence and by its traditional claim to be the chief repository of the best traditions of European culture. The animus came to a rather fanciful expression some years ago in the French campaign against "Coca-colonialism." This campaign assumed that the competition between a popular American drink and the historic French wines was broadly symbolic of the competition between a synthetic and a genuine culture.

The anti-communist but "neutralist" journal *Le Monde* expresses this French attitude in claiming to hold the "technocratic" spirit of Russian and American culture in equal abhorrence, thus obscuring the considerable differences between a tyrannical system and a democratic one. We Americans, who spent years in apologizing for the crudities of a frontier culture, might well be apologetic for some additional years for the vulgarities of a technical culture, in which the necessities of the instruments of mass communication, of the radio, movie and television, have debased the work of the artists. But before we become too apologetic, we must consider that the European, and particularly the French, indictment against us is so sweeping that it condemns our true virtues as well as our vices. A French poet has justified the neutralism of France by the simple expedient of consigning to "barbarism" every human interest involved in the manipulation of power or the organization of social forces. Thus the only areas of "civilization" are paradoxically created only by those who are too impotent or too "other-worldly" to concern themselves with a defence of all the collective securities and social adjustments upon which "civilization" in any large sense, must depend. Civilization in this sense is saved, not without power but also not without a sense of justice. Perhaps we can, with the ancient Romans, lay claim to the possession of a measure of this virtue, particularly when our, as their, detractors define "civilization" in such a way that the "civilized" must become parasitic on the "barbarians" for their protection.

These cultural roots of the anti-American animus are, however, shared in some degree by the whole of Europe. It would therefore be necessary to explain why France expresses them so violently. Britain, for instance, would have a fairer pretext for resenting her present political impotence, since she has been displaced so much more recently as the arbiter of European destinies; and she may boast of a more organic and historic cultural inheritance than France. Yet the animus of the British is mild compared with that of France.

Would it be altogether unfair to regard the excessive degree of the French animus against us as due to her inclination to regard our life as symbolic of the weaknesses in her own life for which she feels herself most guilty? There are several indications that this is one of the causes of French anti-Americanism. We are, in the opinion of France, the hateful collaborators of German "militarism." Does she not have an uneasy conscience for the degree of her acquiescence in the evil deeds of "Nazism"? We are furthermore the center of the power of "capitalism." The French intellectuals have an uneasy conscience over the injustices of their capitalism. They are in fact basically Marxist in their orientation, even when they are explicitly anti-communist. They may have reason to be so in view of the fact that a static and decadent French capitalism seems to verify even the grossest Marxist over-simplifications about the class structure and the class conflict of a technical society. For years the French economy has suffered from alternate periods of mild and gross inflation. Taxes are never sufficient for the needs of the government. Government after government has promised to arrest the inflation by pegging both prices and wages. But

they have been uniformly more successful in freezing wages than in freezing prices. As a result the workers have been consistently worsted in the inflationary spiral. They have in fact become desperate under this continued injustice, the more so because their reluctance to strike (because they feared that the communists would exploit a strike situation) has encouraged the middle classes to further inaction. It is in the light of these facts and this history that one must understand the recent wave of strikes, beginning with harassed government workers and spreading to the industries, until it reached the proportions of an incipient general strike. The desperation of the workers and their resentment over the continued complacency of bourgeois governments merely flooded their anti-communist caution.

No doubt the stubbornness with which the French middle classes exclude the workers from the benefits of French prosperity is partly due to the technical backwardness of French industry. It is easier to share an expanding social fund equitably than to be just in the distribution of a stationary amount of wealth. But there is an additional cause of this stubbornness. There is a lack of a sense of civic virtue in France, compared with the sense of justice in Britain for instance. It is ironic that we should be held responsible for the quality of this moribund capitalism, or should be regarded as the most vivid symbol of its defects. For, no matter what may be the defects of our economic system, it would be unthinkable in our nation to drive a section of our citizens to the desperation which the French workers have experienced in the post-war years. An incident several years ago will illustrate the differences between French and American capitalism. At the time when the British pound was devalued and the French franc had to follow suit, the Quille government had been in power in France for the extraordinary tenure of a year. It had been fairly, though not completely, successful in freezing both wages and prices. But the devaluation of the franc gave a new impetus to the inflationary spiral and the results brought the government down. Our Ambassador at that time was Mr. D. Bruce, a conservative business man, who knew the French economy thoroughly. Speaking to a group of Americans he predicted that the government crisis would be of comparatively short duration. He was of the opinion that the complaint of the workers that the devaluation of the pound had made the previous stabilization policy otiose was so valid that the bourgeois parties would be bound to yield quickly. His prophecy proved to be mistaken. The government crisis lasted six months. The middle class parties refused to yield. The Ambassador made the mistake of judging French politics by his or our standards of justice.

Perhaps the most outrageous transference of their sense of guilt to us by French intellectuals and the French left is the constant insistence that France is holding on in Indo-China purely on the insistence of America. Indo-China is a terrible drain on French resources; and its implications of "Imperialism" are a heavy charge upon the sensitive conscience of the left. But this has not persuaded France to grant the states of Indo-China that measure of independence which would be required to make resistance to communism a genuinely cooperative venture. We have no doubt been responsible for insisting on the overall strategic importance of Indo-China in the global conflict with communism. But we are hardly responsible for the specific defects of French imperialism which have made the conscience of the left so uneasy and the fight against communism in Indo-China so difficult.

The Rosenberg case, reaction to which was cited as the high watermark of anti-Americanism in France, furnishes another interesting illustration of this French transference of guilt to us. It was consistently compared to the Dreyfus case in France. The French intellectuals seemed to believe that the Rosenbergs were innocent not only because communist propaganda insisted on

their innocence but because Dreyfus was innocent. In like manner the anti-Semitism of both cases was established by analogy. The violence of reaction in French intellectual circles to President Eisenhower's failure to commute the Rosenberg sentence may be gathered from a typical utterance by the well-known existentialist, Sartre. Addressing the American people, he writes: "By killing the Rosenbergs you have quite simply tried to halt the progress of science by human sacrifice. . . . Your country is sick with fear. You are afraid of the Soviets, of the Chinese, of the Europeans. You are afraid of each other and of the shadow of your own bomb. . . . I know that there are brave people among you, the lawyer of the Rosenbergs for instance, and Justice Douglas whom you will undoubtedly persecute. Then there are the masses, still healthy though befuddled by you. There are the Negroes, whom you oppress . . . after all the Rosenbergs were Americans; and if we can still have some hope it is because your country gave birth to this man and this woman. Some day perhaps men of goodwill will cure you of your fears. Meanwhile do not be astonished if we cry from one end of Europe to the other: 'Watch out. America has the rabies. Cut all ties with her lest we will be bitten in turn and run mad.' "

The violence and injustice of this emotional reaction is such that it would seem to come from communist hands. But the author is an acknowledged leader of French intellectual life and only recently turned a fellow traveller. The fact is that there is little in our life which corresponds to the French conceptions. These conceptions spring from their own inner stresses rather than from any facts of contemporary history, with one exception, of course. The antics of Senator McCarthy have such a weighty influence upon our relations to other nations, and particularly to France, because McCarthyism seems to justify every false preconception of America held by Europeans. It only seems to justify these prejudices because it is not, as Europe belives, the first indication of an incipient fascism. It may be a serious disease; but it does not prove us to be on the brink of tyranny. Such European, especially French, judgements falsely translate European history into analogies for American realities. Our democratic health is more robust than Europe believes. We have much to learn and many faults to correct from the study of anti-American sentiment. But in the French case the primary problem is to bear with patience an animus which is derived for the most part from French weaknesses rather than our own.

FOR GOOD READING . . .

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A New Experiment in Churchmanship

A Report on Parishfield, Brighton, Michigan*

by members of the Parishfield Community

On the front page of a leaflet published by *Christian Action* is the question, "What can a Christian do?" This is a question with which Parishfield is concerned along with a second, "How does a Christian receive the power and understanding to do anything at all?" In this report we will try to outline the way we are attempting to reach answers at Parishfield.

Training Center

First, however, it will be well to give a few facts about ourselves. Parishfield is a training center for laymen patterned after the European centers such as Driebergen in Holland, the Evangelical Academies in Germany, and Bossey in Switzerland. We have also learned a great deal from Iona in Scotland and from Kirkridge in this country. Parishfield is located on forty acres of marginal farm land four and one half miles from a town of two thousand. Brighton is half way between Detroit and Lansing, forty-five miles from each. We do not represent any "back to the land" or similar movement. Although we would have much preferred to be in a city, the cost would have been considerably higher and the diversion from the task in hand would have been constant.

Our equipment consists of two dormitories (sleeping thirty), three staff houses, a chapel-library, a dining house, and a workshop. In these buildings are both large and small meeting rooms. The architect describes the style as "contemporary farm building," for one staff house and the chapel-library were originally barns and the workshop a hen house. He also says that just at the point most people go to the bank for a loan we stop building, which gives some idea of the simplicity of construction.

Ecumenical Emphasis

On this place live seventeen people—three couples, their ten children, and a single woman. These comprise the Parishfield Community and the "we" of this report. We pool whatever personal income we have and everyone is on an equal salary, so much per adult, so much per child. Our main support comes from people who are interested in our work, most of whom have been here for meetings. There are very few days in the year when from four to twenty-four people are not staying with us for varying periods of time. The usual meeting lasts two days or a week-end. In the summer they last longer. In addition to scheduled meetings every week-end and about every other mid-week, we have people coming in for short and longer periods of time to share in the life and work. Last year, six hundred forty-nine people stayed at Parishfield for a night or longer. The property is owned by the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan, and all the members of the Community are Episcopalians, the men being clergymen. We are not limited in any way, however, to Episcopalians nor to residents of Michigan. We are open to Christians of all denominations and to those who seek within Christianty the answer to their questions. We encourage participation in our work on as broad a denominational base as possible. We believe this to be essential. However, Episcopalians suspect us for many reasons; members of other communions suspect us for the same reasons plus the fact that we are Episcopalians. Nevertheless, we are making headway.

* The writers of this article invite comments and questions. Please address these directly to Parishfield, Brighton, Michigan.

Purpose

We have named our center Parishfield for two reasons: 1) We are determined to be a parish; 2) We think of our task as one of helping to renew parish life. This brings us back to the two questions, "What can a Christian do" and "How does a Christian receive the understanding and power to do anything at all." We believe that the answers to these questions are to be found in and through parish life.

For us, the word parish means a geographical unit of the Christian fellowship. It is synonymous with the Christian community or fellowship in its local manifestation. The fact that this is what parishes are not leaves unaltered the fact that this is what they should be. Furthermore, a parish is (or should be) the community in which a Christian receives power and understanding and the fellowship in which he acts in the world. Our task is, then, to be a parish so that we and those who come here may have the experience of parish life. If this experience is a real one, the people who leave here will be strenghtened to establish or deepen parish life in their own localities.

Old Bottles

The actual parishes which we see around us are cast in a 19th century mold. The eleven o'clock service, vested choirs, Sunday schools, the ladies' aid society, the men's Bible class, "youth" work all stem from another time than ours. When the Church gets hold of something which is, for our time, at least, new, such as group dynamics, we try to use it as a means of pumping new life into these old forms. Even evangelism and missions are approached within this 19th century framework. The fact that little is done to relate "parish" life to the rest of life is just another part of the form. We do not doubt that the Holy Spirit is "poured out" on our parishes, but we feel that, very often, the result is the same as pouring water into a bucket that has been used for target practice.

New Wine

There is no good reason why we have to go on thinking of a parish in these terms. We have much that is fresh to work with. The Bible can be opened as it has not been opened since the third century. Historical criticism has moved ahead to solid ground. The theological revival has interpreted the results magnificently and has brought back the great interpreters of the past. Almost every denomination has its liturgical reform movement. The need for Christian action and the way in which it relates to the rest of the Christian life is being rethought. The importance of discipline has been taught by Christians like Bonhoeffer, Kelly and Underhill. We have also rediscovered the power in groups and learned to understand some of its dynamics.

Furthermore, we have the life of the first parishes to use as a criterion. Acts 2:42 says that the first Christians "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and (the) fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers." This might be called the inner life of an early parish. The outward manifestation was startling, to say the least. They "were together and had all things in common" and they "sold their possessions and goods and distributed to all as any had need." They may have been overly enthusiastic and have underestimated "the hardness of men's hearts," but they took for granted that the inner life would have its outward manifestation in everything they did. They seem to have straightened out their thinking, for as someone remarks later in Acts, "They turned the world upside down."

In attempting to be a parish, the Parishfield Community tries to utilize all that has been given us. We have one great advantage. We are not bound to 19th century forms as are most parishes. We are relatively free to experiment in being a parish in ways more significant to the age in which we live. We are, of course, not only limited as humans but guilty of

helping to perpetuate many of the very things we are trying to change. Fortunately such a confession does not disqualify Christians from launching a new venture.

The inner life of our parish is sustained by sharing the gifts of the Spirit through Bible study, discussion, worship, and prayers.

Bible Study

We begin each day with Bible study. Our approach is one which has come to us from Europe where it has been developed by Suzanne de Dietrich and others. It is a combination of group study and group meditation. We do not believe that group work obviates personal Bible reading and study any more than corporate prayer makes personal prayer unnecessary. We do believe that Bible reading must, with few exceptions, begin in a group and that in all times and places group discipline and personal discipline go together, feeding and enriching each other.

There are many things we would like to say about this way of opening the Bible. We will have to content ourselves by saying that it puts the emphasis where it should be, that this is the Word of God speaking to us and our age. It calls for the use of commentaries and occasional consultation rather than "sitting at the feet" of an expert. It gives the participants confidence that the Bible is readable. It proves that all have something to contribute. As one highly-trained observer said, "I heard the simplest people utter the most profound wisdom."

The Fellowship

As a rule, we give an hour and a half each morning to Bible study. The other "study" periods in the day, at four in the afternoon and at 7:30 at night, are given to whatever the group has gathered to consider. Typical subjects are: parish assessment, prayer, and daily work. We rely heavily on the discussion method. We feel that only in this way can there be a real sharing of the gifts of the Holy Spirit which were given us "for the common good." We often have brief introductions to discussions and we do have lectures in answer to a specific request from the group. The "content" for the discussion comes from the experience of the members of the group, from the reading which we encourage, from the Bible study, and, we have found, most powerfully from the nature of the life that we share at Parishfield.

A case in point is the liturgical side of our parish life. Being Episcopalians, we have Holy Communion twice a week—on a week-day as well as on Sunday. One of the liturgical "reforms" we have instituted is that at the week-day celebration the priest wears only a stole over his work clothes. We do this, in the first place, because we want to emphasize that the difference between priest and layman is one of function and not one of higher and lower orders and, in the second place, because we want to stress the relation of the service to every day life. This liturgical action has started innumerable discussions at Parishfield. Recently we published a picture of it in our quarterly paper. One picture has communicated more about what we are trying to do than all the words we have written in the five years we have been operating.

Except for the two services of Holy Communion, our daily worship is of an informal type. We have simple service at twelve thirty p.m. It consists of a Psalm and Old Testament lesson read in silence, a New Testament lesson read aloud by a member of the congregation, the creed, a hymn or two and prayers, mostly intercessory. In the evening, about ten o'clock, we have family type prayers sitting around the room in which we happen to be meeting. In both services we use corporate silence and, especially in the evening, encourage participation by members of the group. From the close of the evening service until Bible study

the next morning at eight thirty we observe silence. We rise at six thirty and breakfact at seven, which leaves ample time for even those who are on breakfast dish washing to give to personal prayer and devotional reading.

We have, rightly or wrongly, given a good deal of the five years we have been operating to our inner life (and the building of the place). We have, now, begun to give the outward manifestation the full attention it deserves. We will, no doubt, have to change and modify but at the moment our inner life manifests itself in four ways.

Daily Work

Manual work is an integral part of our discipline. The only outside help we have is a neighbor who comes in for three to five hours a day to cook lunch and supper. All the rest of the work—dishwashing, cleaning, gardening, the maintenance of buildings and grounds—is done by the permanent and temporary members of the community. We work two hours a day. While a meeting is under way, we work in the morning from the close of the Bible study period until the noon-day prayers. If no regular meeting is in session, we usually work in the afternoon.

Obviously, all but a few people in the world work more than two hours a day. We couldn't work a full day and have time, let alone energy, for Bible study and four hours of discussion. The work period, however, accomplishes much that has to be done. It witnesses to the wholeness of the Christian life. It enriches and deepens the fellowship and gives content to the discussions. It is, therefore, indispensable to what we are trying to be.

A second outward and visible sign is Parishfield itself. The main job of the permanent community is to be a parish. Whereas others work in factories, offices, homes, schools or government, our work is to meet people who come here and to incorporate them into our life. This is a part of the work of every parish. That it constitutes our main work is the principal difference between us and other parishes. It also constitutes our greatest danger, for we all always tempted (and often succumb) to be concerned simply with the parish itself, to become introverted, and to make our parish life a little island separated from all the other islands of modern life. Fragmentation and discontinuity are evils to be fought in our parish life as much as in any.

The Community

Another manifestation of our inner life is the fact that we live in community. If a relationship becomes burdensome or distasteful, we cannot substitute a new relationship without breaking the community. If we disagree on how to bring up children, we cannot ignore, let alone publicly denounce, another's method; we have got to find common ground. We have nothing about which we can boast in having stayed together and worked together as a parish. It has been accomplished by the sheer grace of God which has come to us through our common prayer, Bible study, sharing in discussion and liturgical life.

The fourth manifestation of our inner life is that increasingly our meetings are being called for the express purpose of considering the Christian witness in daily life and that increasingly all our discussions regardless of the purpose of the meeting are pointed in this direction. It is just at this point we have most to learn and need the most help. We join battle here not only against what Max Picard has called "Hitler in ourselves" but in the world and in the Church. It is just at this point that all parishes or fellowships must stand shoulder to shoulder as the Christian Community to attack the power of darkness.

(Continued on p. 20, Col. 2)

Further Discussion of the Focus for Christian Action

Robert E. Fitch

John Bennett's treatment of the "Focus for Christian Action" is so important to all of us that this writing is an attempt to exploit the article as a basis for continuing discussion. Most persons would agree that Mr. Bennett has offered an excellent program—especially in the diagnosis of recent changes, and in the statements on foreign policy, on the race issue, on civil liberties, and on the theological foundations of our activity. If I concentrate largely on his presentation of domestic economic policy and of the problem of partisan politics, that is because these are the areas where discussion seems to be most needed. It should not be assumed, however, that the points I am raising are always points of disagreement, since the comprehensive and necessarily compact character of Bennett's essay made it impossible for him to elaborate certain details.

1. *Public Housing*

Public housing is mentioned by Mr. Bennett as "one of the gains which is now seriously threatened," and which "calls for vigorous support on our part."

First of all, there is a serious question in the minds of many persons whether this is at all a national policy, or even a state problem. Apart from emergency situations, it would seem to be a peculiarly metropolitan problem. And the farther west one goes, the less is this viewed as a problem which calls for governmental action. Aside from provincial prejudices, many persons feel that the real solution is not to provide better housing *in* our cities, but to get people and their businesses *out of* our cities to some ampler area where they can live and work in decency. The over-grown metropolis has no justification in an age of advanced technology.

In the second place, there is a serious question as to whether this problem is met best by federal action or by private initiative. I have a notion that one Levittown is worth half a dozen federally sponsored projects within a metropolis. There is a dignity to a house and yard of one's own—no matter how ramshackle the house nor how littered the yard—which marks the superior status of the slum-dweller in Dallas, Texas, over the slum-dweller in East Harlem. Perhaps federal aid can be used most effectively in an indirect way—by clearing certain areas for construction, by facilitating the supply of basic materials, and by reducing down-payments and interest rates on F. H. A. loans. But the objective should be home ownership, rather than the occupancy of subsidized model apartments.

2. *Agriculture*

As Mr. Bennett recognizes, "the political necessity of paying attention to the interests of agriculture" is probably accepted by both Republicans and Democrats. In terms of simple vote-getting it is unlikely that either party will be too aloof to the demands of farmers, in spite of partisan differences in official ideology. If so, this is all the more reason why *Christian Action* should scrutinize rigorously and critically the whole problem of agriculture.

For one thing the policy of government aid to agriculture so easily runs into a *reductio ad absurdum.* It achieved one form of absurdity in plowing under hogs and corn. It works toward another form of absurdity in the fantastic accumulation of surplus commodities—in butter, potatoes, wheat, and now, it is proposed, in beef. We could reach the preposterous point of having more food refrigerated or rotting away than we actually produce in a single year. It would make some sense if the consumer who is taxed to maintain this program were rewarded with lower prices. The grand irony is that he is taxed to sup-

port a program which costs him higher prices for the product he protects.

Perhaps a more serious danger in present procedure is the fact that it encourages the unskilled and the incompetent in agriculture. Any one who lives in a farming area knows plenty of persons, initially unqualified, who have moved into agricultural pursuits simply to cut in on a good thing that was being given a privileged position by the government. These are among the most vocal of the protestants when their privileges are removed. As for the serious-minded farmer or cattle-raiser, he no longer feels the incentive to develop new uses for his output, or to vary his product, or to improve his efficiency, or to shift to other fields of endeavor. That way lies stagnation in any enterprise.

3. *Labor and Business*

Mr. Bennett has given us a good analysis of the changed status of labor in the past couple of decades. At this present moment, however, he suggests that we must call attention "vividly to the need of preserving the power of labor to influence national policy," while he makes plain his fear of "the tendency of the President to surround himself with representatives of business."

One is prompted to ask: why do we regret the influence of business men, but seek to promote the influence of labor? In particular, why should we do so when both the political power and the financial power of labor have grown to such tremendous proportions in recent years? Is there any principle in Christian anthropology or in political democracy that calls for such a distinction? Surely what we cannot tolerate in our society is the doctrine that there is a class of the élite, who are the redeemers, and a class of the damned who are inherently evil and anti-social. Democracy is a doctrine of the alternation and rotation of centers of power. It is our primary concern not to prefer one class over the other, nor even to seek to keep both in some artificial balance of power, but rather to consider, empirically and pragmatically, when the leadership may fall most profitably to one group or to the other.

There are, moreover, two aspects of the American labor movement today that clamor for critical attention from *Christian Action*. One is the increasing evidence that the top brass of organized labor is unresponsive to and unrepresentative of the needs of its members. This may be more true of the A.F.L. than of the C.I.O. In any case the officers of the entrenched hierarchy are so hard to get at by the lay members that one often runs into the astounding situation where the ordinary laboring man hates the top boss in his union more than he hates his capitalist boss in the factory. The reason for this is simple. He can get at his capitalist boss, through a strike, or through the courts. But the devices by which he is to get at the bosses of his own union hierarchy become more and more tenuous and tortuous.

In any case, the evidence seems inescapable that the political judgments of the hierarchy of organized labor do not always represent the political attitudes of the members. This I was able to verify in a few local instances in the latest presidential election. I would not know how to check the evidence on a national scale. Yet it seems obvious that the last time Taft was elected to the Senate he must have had some good support from labor. And it seems clear that a great many American union men voted for Eisenhower regardless of what their officers told them to do. If, indeed, there is a growing gap between the political interests of labor and the political interests of labor leaders, we shall have to exercise a greater caution about supporting the "influence of labor," and an enhanced shrewdness about pretending that we even know what it is that the laboring man wants.

4. *A Stable or a Dynamic Economy*

Mr. Bennett says, "It is now taken for

granted that it is the responsibility of government to preserve economic stability." But if this is now taken for granted by all political parties, perhaps this is precisely the point where the Christian conscience should be most critically alert. Mr. Bennett had no space to elaborate this important statement, and it is therefore probable that the ensuing discussion may, by implication, do him an injustice. However, it seems to me that there are two questions here of the utmost gravity.

The first question is whether the responsibility of the government for preserving economic stability is primary, or incidental. The generic question, in social philosophy, is whether a given activity has the primary responsibility itself of preserving its own stability, or whether it delegates that responsibility to another activity. At any rate, when there is such delegation, there is some form of social paternalism. It may be the paternalism of the Church in the Middle Ages, or, if you like, the paternalism of Wall Street in nineteenth century American history, or the paternalism of the State. But any activity which has to depend for its fundamental stability on another activity is already in a subordinate position. As I understand the ideal of a free society, it is one in which the stability of the family, or of the arts, or of science, or of religion, or of business, must be the principal responsibility of the activity concerned. And I think it is historically demonstrable that any assumption of this responsibility by an outside authority—in the case of the church, or of business, or of the arts—results in the devitalization of the ward by the warden.

The second question has to do with our habit of talking about economic stability to the neglect of economic progress. Somehow or other one has to choose between a stable economy and a dynamic economy. It is of course understandable that after a great economic depression, then a fighting world war, then a cold world war, we should all yearn for stability and for security. That this yearning for stability characterizes the employer as well as the employee is made quite plain in Howard R. Bowen's description of the large corporation in his *Social Responsibilities of the Businessman.* Perhaps this is all the more reason why we should hearken to Kenneth E. Boulding's plea for the criterion of progress in economics in the second chapter of *Goals of Economic Life.* If it is true that an excessive dynamism makes for anarchy—as it did in our recent past, it is also true that an excessive yen for stability makes for stagnation. Between running riot, or rotting in one's tracks, there may seem to be little choice. But a healthy mind, or a healthy church, or a healthy economy is one that is more eager to take both the rewards and the risks of growth than simply to play safe.

5. *Christian Action and Partisan Politics*

Finally, while we all share in Mr. Bennett's criticisms of the "doctrinaire individualists," let us be humbly aware that we have not yet purged ourselves altogether of a doctrinaire socialism or Marxism.

When I think of doctrinaire individualism at its sinister best, I think of California's gift to the executive branch of the government, Vice-President Nixon. Some time ago *The Reporter* published an interview with Nixon in which there was made quite clear the bold and naive manner in which Nixon identifies the good of the nation with the interests of big business. The simple faith of our Vice-President is the more disturbing when one realizes that he supports it with a certain narrow integrity of character and some degree of intellectual talent. That there are such doctrinaire individualists abroad in the land, and that some of them are in positions of great power, is not to be denied.

But I confess that, from the point of view of *Christian Action,* I am equally disturbed by those doctrinaire liberals who

bring too glibly the sanctions both of patriotism and of Christian ethics, not at all to any generally collectivist program, but to specific techniques and mechanisms of a policy that may have been wonderfully creative a decade ago, but that is not altogether relevant now. It was part of the glory of Christian socialism in this country in the 1930's that it gave immoderate support to political measures which, applied in moderation, were part of the salvation of the nation. If we must err again, then let us err once more by looking farther ahead than we should, rather than by looking back to what we once knew and once did.

As for the clue to the immediate situation, I am content to accept John Bennett's suggestion that, in the continuing revolution, we must give more attention "to the decentralization of power, to finding viable combinations of public and private initiative, to the encouragement of state and local government." And for the larger problem, we are called upon to inquire afresh into the generic features of a democratic society, and to examine again the Christian foundations of our social philosophy.

New Experiment

(Continued from p. 16)

In Faith

It is just at this point that from a wordly point of view we suffer one defeat after another. We said that we named our center Parishfield, 1) because we were determined to be a parish and 2) because we see our task as one of helping to renew parish life. There is no reality to what we are doing here unless it can be realized elsewhere. We try to help people who have been here to return to their own homes and with others be a parish or deepen what is already there. They are handicapped by our lack of vision and what Genesis 11 calls our attempts "to make a name for ourselves." They are handicapped by the pressures, the fragmentation, the forms in which they must live. Our job is not only similar to, but also, humanly speaking, just as presumptuous as calling the present day Church to Christian Action. Only God, as we respond to Him in trust and obedience, can bring any measure of victory.

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REVIEWS

Ethics and Economic Life Series

Social Responsibilities of the Businessman, By Howard R. Bowen, with commentary by F. Ernest Johnson; Harper and Brothers, New York; 1953, 276 pp., $3.50.

The social responsibilities of the businessman is a subject of wide concern in American life. The businessman himself frequently believes that he must assume greater responsibility for the welfare of the national community if for no other reason than to avoid the imposition of obligations upon him by government. The churches have tried to speak to the business community about its obligations to workers and to consumers for at least two generations. The story of the rise of industrial unions among American workers as long ago as the labor career of Debs testifies to a consciousness of a neglected social responsibility on the part of the businessman. In this book, Howard R. Bowen, professor of economics at Williams College, discusses the contemporary situation both in the practice and the thought of American businessmen. The book is the third in the series on "Ethics and Economic Life" produced by a study committee of the Federal Council of Churches.

Professor Bowen gives us a well organized survey of a great deal of literature written by businessmen, economists, and ethicists on various aspects of the problem of responsibility in the business community. He indicates that in American capitalism there can be no economic decisions that do not have implications for the whole society. Recognizing that the businessman is "the symbol of our culture" (p. 3), Mr. Bowen seeks to interpret from within, the businessman's conception of his responsibilities, both general and specific, and the reasons why the businessman is concerned about social responsibility. He finds that motives are not altruistic, but rather are a self-interest which understands virtually that what is good for the country is usually good for General Motors. Among the specific responsibilities discussed are the following: to sell American free enterprise and the ideas upon which it is based, to create better human relations in the business world by developing a sense of vocation among workers and by satisfying not only the economic needs but also the needs for fulfillment of the self, to have good local community relations, to have open channels with government policy decision makers, to increase productivity, to prevent fluctuations from depression to inflation, to preserve the competitive nature of the national economy, and to conserve natural resources. As to why the businessman is concerned, Bowen finds the chief reason to be the developing humanitarian moral climate in American culture. In addition to this he recognizes the coercive role that the labor movement and government policy, and other factors as well, have had in changing the attitudes of businessmen. The survey of motives is followed by an evaluation of the doctrine of social responsibility and of various proposals for making social responsibility more effective. The most novel of these is one of Mr. Bowen's for a "social audit" of the policies of management by an independent board of experts made up of persons representing various interests and disciplines. The final chapters sketch the ethical issues involved in income distribution and other aspects of the economy.

So many aspects of social responsibility, and so many problems are delineated that the discussion of each is in most cases too brief to give either new information or illuminating interpretation and criticism. On the whole, Mr. Bowen is trying to give a sympathetic treatment of his problem from within the perspective of the business community. His conception of the ethics involved seems to center around the value of harmony (least possible conflict), the fulfillment of the selfhood of as many individuals as possible, and the

cultivation of moral responsibility free from the intervention of government.

The second part of the book is a commentary by F. Ernest Johnson. The purpose of the commentary is to set the discussion in a more specifically Christian ethical frame of reference. Mr. Johnson is faced with an impossible task, for at its best a theologically oriented addendum to a non-theologically oriented discussion can only make suggestions and not thoroughly evaluate issues and proposals. To this reviewer, Mr. Johnson's conception of Christian ethics is unclear, for he says at one point that the Christian ethic "is built on the family pattern" (p. 239). This is hardly distinctive enough from the democratic Christian humanitarianism that moves Bowen's judgments to sharpen the issues involved. At other points Mr. Johnson indicates that Christian ethics begins with the assumption of human sin, and he indicates some of the consequences of this assumption for economic policy.

I would raise four general criticisms and suggest a possible alternative form for a study of this kind. First, one wonders to what audience or community the book is addressed. The businessman will find little that is novel in the book, either by way of information or interpretation. Much material with which he has some familiarity is conveniently organized within one volume. The pastor will find little by way of Christian ethical interpretation and evaluation of the life of the business world to guide him in his preaching and his discussions with his members from the business community. The theologian will not find the confrontation and dialectic between theology and the disciplines of the social and policy sciences that he might have hoped for. The social scientist will find that the analyses of problems is hardly thorough enough to convince him even if he is predisposed to recognize the role of values in his studies. The "general reader," for whom the book would be of help, will probably never read it.

My second criticism has been indicated in the course of the first. We are not getting in this book an analysis from the perspective of a Christian ethic that is imbued with the knowledge and significance of major doctrines of historic Christian faith. This is no negative judgment on Professor Bowen and Mr. Johnson; it only points to the fact that we have few social scientists who are competent theologains and few theologians who are competent social scientists. Recognizing that the combination is almost impossible in one man, one might suggest that volumes which seek to interpret ethics for economic life ought to emerge out of seminars over an extended period of time in which theologians and social scientists develop a more common frame of interpretation, and an understanding of each other's vocabularies.

My third criticism points to an inadequate understanding of contemporary society in the volume. Although at several points Mr. Bowen discusses the mutual responsibilities of government and business, at no point to my recollection does he analyze the accepted responsibility for *political* life by the business community. It is clear to many observers that one of the principle channels for social responsibility not only for the businessman, but for other interest groups as well, is politics. Business is not only related to government once an administration is established, but through the channels of the political party, the selection of advisers to policy makers, and key appointive administrators, business helps to form the basic perspective on the welfare of the national community. This is a phenomenon of contemporary American life neither to be denied nor frowned upon. But it should be analyzed within a study of the ethics of economic life, and both its ramifications of Christian ethics and an ethical evaluation of it should have a place in a book on the *Social Responsibilities of the Businessman.*

My fourth criticism is that many of the constructive proposals made in the book are platitudinous in character. I

would suggest as one example the following (p. 138): "Clearly, if the concept of social responsibility is to be a force in our society, the public must acquire definite attitudes regarding business operations and must develop a set of generally accepted standards or rules which businessmen are expected to follow. With such accepted rules in the background, the education of businessmen would lead them to *want* to follow the rules because they would regard them as 'right,' and the public by the power of informal sanctions would enforce these rules." The moral realism to which Christian Action seeks to witness is its own judgment on such statements.

One wonders if a case study of the decision-making process of a corporation on a specific issue made by competent theologians, economists, sociologists, and others might not give us a more illuminating and useful book on the complexities and possibilities of the acceptance of social responsibility by American businessmen.

James Gustafson

A Christian Discourse on History

Christianity and the Problem of History, by Roger Lincoln Shinn; Charles Scribner's Sons, New York; 1953; 302 pp., $4.50.

Dr. Shinn combines in enviable fashion an ability in lucid and compact exposition with a comprehensive and profound understanding of the difficult problem with which he deals. As a result, this brilliant book is of value both for those who desire an introduction to the contemporary discussions concerning Biblical eschatology and Christian hope and also for those who have been struggling with this problem and seek further clarification and insight. It is extremely timely in that it provides a good understanding of the issues that are being debated in preparation for the meeting of the World Council of Churches at Evanston this summer.

The book has a negative and a positive thesis. The negative one, given minor emphasis, may be stated in the proposition *"History is not the solution of the human problem, but part of the problem demanding solution"* (p. 201, italics his). The positive and major thesis is that the Christian faith provides the key for a true understanding of the human situation, but that "the problem of the Christian interpretation of history is to make its conception of the fulfillment of human life (the Kingdom of God) relevant to history without confusing it with historical accomplishments which are of ambiguous worth" (p. 96). In dealing with the problem, Shinn's work falls into three parts.

In the first part, there is a critical analysis of the way certain of the giants of Christian thought have dealt with the problem of the meaning and significance of human history in the past. The author introduces the useful analogy of the "three-stranded thread" in making clear that there are three themes central to a Christian interpretation of history; all the strands must be given attention in a balanced view. "The first is the emphasis upon the ultimate eschatological fulfillment which gives meaning to an otherwise chaotic and incomplete history. The second is the significance within history of the divine society, conceived as the true church, in contrast to the earthly society. The third is the appreciation of history itself, including 'secular' history and its dynamic possibilities of human achievement" (pp. 52 f.). Shinn shows how one theologian has emphasized one strand and another a different one. Combining in a refreshing way the gift of appreciating the contributions of our significant predecessors with an incisive analysis of them, he enters into an insightful conversation with Augustine and Aquinas, Luther and Calvin, and some others.

The second part of the book is a survey of certain modern viewpoints concerning the problem of history. The impact of the idea of progress, the challenge of Marxist doctrines, the contribution of Catholic

interpretations of history, the influence of the rediscovery of Biblical eschatology, the significance of Toynbee's synthesis—all these are treated compactly but with a balanced combination of summary, analysis, and criticism.

The third part (his "conclusion") undertakes something which could well become a standard pattern for those who give historical surveys and contemporary analyses: it provides a constructive treatment of the problem about which the solutions of others have been discussed. Thus the viewpoint of the author is made clear, and a fresh contribution to an important debate is offered. The use of the analogy of the three-stranded thread in his own positive effort makes clear the underlying unity of the whole.

Such a comprehensive work is bound to miss some important areas. It is unfortunate that there is not a section dealing with the interpretation of history characteristic of the evangelical revival; an incidental listing of major Christian thinkers as "Paul, Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, and Wesley" (p. 238) suggests that the jump from Reformation to modern times is a bit too hasty. His constructive conclusion will stimulate many to declare different emphasis than his own; indeed there have already appeared on the pages of this journal reactions to his work (cf. A. Roy Eckardt, "Two Marginal Notes on the Prophetic View of History," *Christianity and Society*, Vol. XVIII, No. 3 [Summer, 1953], 17–19). This reviewer finds the analogy of the three-stranded thread most useful, but would suggest that the first strand is to be seen in something of a polar relation to the others, and that the latter two seem at times to be variant expressions of a familiar theme (as is suggested in the quotations from Figgis and Nichols, pp. 71 and 86). But he who reads this admirable book without being stirred to a thoughtful reconsideration of the whole matter has misread it indeed.

Robert T. Handy

Essays in Theology and Politics

Christian Realism and Political Problems; Essays on Political, Social, Ethical and Religious Themes. By Reinhold Niebuhr; Charles Scribner's Sons, New York; 1953; 203 pp., $3.00.

It is not easy to characterize this series of essays. They range over the whole realm of interest which has engaged Niebuhr's thought during the last decades (though they are all of very recent vintage) and to the analysis of which he has addressed himself again and again in his lectures and sermons. Those who know him will find nothing new in this book, yet they will not be able to say that he repeats what he has written somewhere else. It is characteristic of Reinhold Niebuhr that, though his thinking continues to circle around the same themes with the same dialectical skill inspired by a sure faith in the suffering mercy of God who judges and redeems man's finite freedom, he is able to lend ever new freshness to his interpretations of the human situation. In this respect he differs, for example, from Brunner, who, so it seems to me, has filled many volumes saying the same thing all over again that he has said many times before. Reinhold Niebuhr is saved from such a predicament because he always remains a good preacher. As he brings the truth of the gospel to bear upon the illusions and self-deceits of man, he addresses them in the particular concrete situation in which they find themselves. He is an *effective* preacher whom people gladly hear again and again because by virtue of a genuine spiritual sensitivity, he refrains from forcing the Gospel into the capsule of theological systematics while, thanks to a lively awareness of man's historical nature, he interprets its relevance by emphasizing the new and unprecedented in the affairs of men.

Here are some of the major themes of the essays presented in the volume under review: In the light of "Biblical Realism," the lack of realism in the basic assumptions of significant contemporary thought is rendered apparent: "The illusion of world government" is that its protagonists "flee to

the illusory security of the impossible from the insecurity and ambiguities of the possible" (II). "Communism is so evil" because it combines ruthless monopolistic power with the pursuit of pretended ideal ends (III). "The anomaly of European Socialism" consists in the fact that contrary to empirical evidence, its spokesmen persist in regarding capitalism as the main root of imperialism (IV). The preoccupation of the Marxists with the ideological character of all human thought is as unrealistic as the refusal of liberal social thinkers to acknowledge that man's historical nature cannot be adequately interpreted by means of objective "scientific" methods (V).

Particular attention should be called to two of the theological chapters. In his treatment of "Augustine's Political Ethics," Dr. Niebuhr proves himself, in my opinion, as a sound historical interpreter. In very brief compass he succeeds in clarifying the complete thought of Augustine without simplifying it. He interprets the several levels of Augustine's love ethic without criticizing it unduly from the standpoint of an abstract conception of Agape and without neglecting attention to the fact that Augustine's preoccupation with the neoplatonic ideal of self-realization was profoundly modified by his Pauline understanding of self-love as the root of all sin.

In the discussion of "Coherence, Incoherence and the Christian Faith," Neibuhr gives a shrewd reply to those of his critics who accuse him of "attacking reason." (He himself does not say that it is his purpose to make such a reply, but I think that the chapter may well be read as serving this end.) Over against the undialectical theologies of the Christian rationalists and their critics (Barth), he argues for the unavoidableness of a theological dialogue between the disciplines of culture (including philosophy) and the Christian faith, showing that the gospel is not properly understood either when it is regarded as the completion of human ideals or when it is seen to stand at the limits of human wisdom.

Wilhelm Pauck

Deus Absconditus

God Hidden and Revealed, by John Dillenberger; Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia, 1953; 185 pp., $2.50.

It was Emil Brunner who once said that every new idea which occurred to him turned out to be an idea already made articulate by Martin Luther. This statement illustrates part of what John Dillenberger is talking about in his book *God Hidden and Revealed, i.e.,* the profound relevance of Luther's contribution to the present human situation. A "re-discovery" of this relevance was first begun when, at the turn of the century, Protestant theologians paid serious attention to Luther, partly because of a renewed interest in the Protestant heritage, and partly in an attempt to sharpen tools needed to deal with an active Roman Catholicism. One consequence was a grappling (sometimes unfruitful with respect to a real understanding of Luther) with Lutheran doctrine, and a fresh dealing with the problems such study included. Another, according to the author, is the contemporary re-vitalization of theological thinking.

Mr. Dillenberger traces the history of this re-examination of Luther primarily with respect to the doctrine of the *deus absconditus.* In several chapters he exposes the views held by Ritschl, his followers, Rudolph Otto, Brunner, and Barth. At the same time that he is interested in carefully exposing these various and sometimes conflicting views, he is also pointing towards the last chapter in which he unfolds his own view, neatly resolving (by giving order and unity to) the theological paradoxes and contradictions examined by his predecessors. Here he also discusses what he calls "the new theological direction" which direction has been made possible, according to him, partly because of a better understanding of the *deus absconditus.*

Thus the book moves along two distinct levels, one a history of Lutheran criticism, the other a "new theology" which has

grown out of this criticism. They are joined in the last chapter which picks up the theological implications in the historical essays which precede it. The result is a carefully documented book valuable on two counts. As an historical survey, the book is an orderly presentation of important materials not fully exposed before, and therefore of value to the scholar. As a critical treatment of the concept of the hidden God of Christian faith it is helpful in fastening Christian attention upon the first person of the Trinity whose majesty and mystery confront man at all times and in all places and put him under judgment. This God remains a mystery to Christian faith even though he has been revealed through Jesus Christ, His Son.

Thus the author attempts to show that the *deus absconditus* (revealed in Christ) whose real countenance no creature can bear to behold is the same God who acts in unexpected ways by pulling the mighty from their seat and raising up the low, by attaining victory through defeat (the Cross), by penetrating evil with good, in short a God whose action is usually unexpected. All this means that the mystery of God is not only the mystery of his communication (the Cross) but that it is also his nature (as man tries to conceive of it *behind* the Cross) which is mysterious and hidden.

The correlation of hiddenness and revelation throws new light on immanence and transcendence, revelation and reason, and history. (These are ably discussed in the last chapter with a particularly penetrating insight into the matter of Christian faith.) To mankind which stands always under God's judgment in history, the *deus absconditus* is not irrelevant; there is a relationship between man's present "crisis under God" and the fact that the worlds of God and man belong to different spheres of thought and action, perception and expectation.

Mr. Dillenberger has dealt with all this in a learned way, adding to the already vast literature which has grown up around Luther; and if the last chapter is any indication there are more books whence this one came. But one hopes that in them Mr. Dillenberger will take more seriously a problem which he discusses but does not try to solve. There is a noticeable failure to come to terms with the problem of communication. Having made mention of the *need* to retranslate Luther (or anyone else) for each generation, Mr. Dillenberger continues to rely upon traditional jargon, leaving the ultimate solution of actual retranslation to Sunday School teachers, preachers and others who must come to actual terms with it. He continues to write and speak as though the words of our tradition were meaningful to all men. This is a grave risk. It is up to the generation, of which Mr. Dillenberger has proven himself an able and intelligent representative, not only to disclose this problem but also to take a few steps, however halting, towards solving it—by using a new and powerful vocabulary (neither borrowed from psychology nor from philosophy) in order to give the traditional (and often necessary) vocabulary a deeper meaning. Mr. Dillenberger's vocabulary, however much it communicates to the learned, remains indigestible for the untutored but interested layman to whom, as a theologian, he must speak.

Marion K. Hausner

Church History from Within

The Christian Society, by Stephen Neill; Harper and Brothers, New York; 1953; 352 pp., $3.50.

It is in line with the movement of contemporary Christian conviction that church history, like theology, should become "confessional" and should be conceived of not as a bare chronicle of Christian activity nor as the history of ideas which happen to be carried by a community, but as the history of the believing community from within, as it articulates itself out of its own self-consciousness in life and worship, doctrine and discipline. It is just such a history that Bishop Neill has written.

It is not without reason that this has been hailed as the best one-volume church history presently available. It may very well be the best ever written. It compasses twenty centuries and all the main traditions, including the Eastern. It manages to include succinct accounts of the modern missionary movement, of the younger churches in their developing indigenous life, and of the growth of ecumenical cooperation. One would suppose that it would be difficult beyond measure to get all the facts in; yet here would appear to be all the essential and determinative facts, and no fact without its meaning. One scarcely knows what to admire most: the book's clarity, or comprehensiveness, or the extraordinary balance and proportion of the whole.

The writer is a missionary of long experience, a church statesman and evangelist of great and present influence, a loyal member and Bishop in the Angelican communion. He is not without conviction on matters that divide the Church, but he is a passionate spokesman for the things that unite, and highly knowledgeable about the meaning and balance of past and present debates, for example about papacy and episcopacy. He does not hesitate to record the fact which formally tells against his own official position, as when he describes (on p. 41) Iranaeus' version of the meaning of the episcopal office:

> "There is no emphasis on tactual succession as the means by which authority is conveyed. It is succession in office, in authority and in responsibility, which to Iranaeus is the essential factor in the unity of the Church in space and time, a unity which is grounded in the truth and can be preserved only as the Church maintains undiminished the original deposit of truth."

He is concerned chiefly with the internal life of the Christian Society, though he is insistent, as he puts it (on p. 205) that while "the Church remains always and unchangeably the same," yet, "it cannot in fact escape the destiny of constant action and reaction with the world in the midst of which it is set."

This is in many ways the ideal book for the enquirer, or for the lay Christian who wants to understand better his own existence *as* a Christian, which is to say as a member of the believing community. Bishop Neill writes well, cursively, and lucidly, without rhetoric yet not without profound feeling. The logic of the Church's age-long development comes out clearly, the dire logic as well as the divine logic. It is a picture of the Christian Society "warts and all," to be loved not for the figure it cuts, but for the Life that is in it.

Would that someone would do the same job for the Christian Society in its relations with the wider societies of men. Since John McNeill's *Christian Hope for World Society* went out of print we have nothing between Troeltsch's massive and turgid two-volume classic, and S. L. Greenslade's excellent 100-page brochure, *The Church and the Social Order.* It may be too much to hope that Bishop Neill will do it; but at least he has provided both an inspiration and an example.

Alexander Miller

Taking God Seriously

The Optional God, By Stephen F. Bayne, Jr., Bishop of Olympia. Oxford University Press, New York, 1953; 145 pp., $2.45.

This book, based on the Bishop Paddock lectures given at General Theological Seminary, is an unusually lively and well-written statement of Christian social duty in relation to such matters as the state, education, work, freedom, and the Church. Bishop Bayne begins by pointing out that many people in our society hold that belief in the Christian God is merely optional and that it is possible for men to have a right relation to each other in their secular lives without taking Him seriously into account. This is a dangerous illusion and he seeks to show how this is so in regard to the practical matters already mentioned.

The book says little that is new and

some things it says in such general terms that the reader finds it hard to derive much significance from his agreement with them. In the chapter on 'Community and Communion' for example, it would have been helpful if the Bishop had gone on to indicate how the many true and wise things he says about the Church as "the world's soul" could be worked out in relation to the particular vocation of the Episcopalian Church in America. Nevertheless, he makes his points with such freshness and vigour and wit that his book becomes one of the most useful introductions to Christian social duty which can be put into the hands of the intelligent layman.

In the last paragraph of his introduction, Bishop Bayne speaks of his book as "the writing of an unashamed liberal in what is now generally called the 'old-fashioned' sense of the term." I hope readers of *Christianity and Society* will not be put off by this curious declaration or by the singularly ambiguous phrasing of the paragraph which contains it. Liberalism is one of the vaguest of terms but I had always thought that the main charge brought against self-consciously 'old-fashioned' liberals by their modern critics was precisely that they inadvertently encouraged the notion that belief in God as He has revealed Himself in Christ was optional.

Daniel Jenkins

Tradition Re-examined

Tradition, Freedom, and the Spirit, by Daniel Jenkins; Westminster Press, 1952; 195 pp., $3.00.

The fact that this very remarkable book has not yet made its deserved impact upon American Protestantism is an indictment not of its author or its contents, but of the reading habits of American Protestants. There are certainly few recent books which have as much to say to the total life and health of the Church as this one, and readers of this journal should set time aside to master the material Mr. Jenkins has here assembled. Furthermore, when one considers the usual level of American "religious books," a market dominated by volumes of warmed-over sermons, it is the more remarkable that this book is the product of a Congregational manse in Surrey. (Candor compels me to admit that Mr. Jenkins, in addition to being the pastor of a church is also, for three months of the year, a visiting professor at Chicago. This fact, however, it can joyfully be reported, in no sense vitiates the vigor and candor of the book, and pastors, as much or more than mere professors, ought to read it.)

The book proposes to initiate a fresh "conversation" on the subject of tradition. It has the engaging style of a conversation, salted with enough documentation to make it trustworthy, and peppered with the kind of "godly polemics" which are so much more characteristic of British theological writing than of our own labored attempts to spar with the opposition. However, while "protestants" may occasionally revel in the acuteness of a point made against the "catholics," they must be warned that Mr. Jenkins' pen, which wounds only in order that it may heal, is also on many occasions thrust in their own direction.

And it is particularly as the argument turns upon the implicit assumptions of many American churchmen, that the book assumes its greatest value for us. For to those who go all out for freedom, and want to shake free of the "shackles of tradition," heritage, and all the rest, Mr. Jenkins preaches the stern lesson that we of all people need to recover the values of tradition—tradition which is not the Dead Hand of The Past, but tradition which is understood in the context of the present guidance of the Holy Spirit and of the freedom of the Christian man.

After pointing out the primacy of tradition in the Old Testament, the author describes how Christ stands *in* the tradition, and yet as one who judges and purges it. This leads to a very fresh and stimulating discussion of the "liberty of the Christian man," surely one of the most abused

doctrines of modern liberal Protestantism. Mr. Jenkins rightly reminds us that it is only in the context both of tradition and the Spirit that true freedom can be claimed.

> "It is the man who, knowing the contradiction in which he stands apart from Christ and finding newness of life in His Spirit, has been led from that to a revaluation of the religious tradition in which he is set, who is in a position to know that freedom with which Christ sets us free. And it is only when he knows that freedom that he is in a position to discern the will of Christ here and now" (p. 70).

This "revaluation" is studied in the context of the life of the early church and is followed by an illuminating study of "Tradition and Catholicity," which sets the whole discussion of "Protestant-Catholic differences" in the kind of solid context which American Protestantism particularly needs. Here is material for a theologically viable conversation on our part with "catholics," which could take us a great deal further than conventional polemics against Cardinal Spellman, or mere reiteration of the arguments of Paul Blanshard, or flip dismissals of Anglican orders. Particularly helpful in this chapter as well is the discussion of the relationship of the Church to those "on the outside"—a discussion as helpful to "protestants" as to "catholics." Here it is shown that the implications of the Scriptural belief in a cosmic redemption wrought by Christ make it necessary for us to realize that "the Spirit's action cannot be confined rightly within the limits of the empirical Church, and that the sphere of what is misleadingly called the secular is as much the sphere of His activity as the sacred" (p. 101).

Throughout the rest of the book the implications of the central thesis are examined in a variety of areas, in every one of which the American reader has much to learn. Particularly important contributions are made in the discussions of the true significance of infant baptism (pp. 102–105), the place of creeds in Protestant church life (pp. 131–135), and in the remarkable and needed vindication of the positive values of city life (pp. 137 ff.).

The whole tone of the book is thus directed to recall to us the creativity of the tradition in which we stand, the necessity of using it aright, and the problem of relating a rich heritage not only to "life in a technological society" (Ch. 9) but also to the worship of the Church herself (Ch. 10). All in all, an outstanding contribution.

Robert McAfee Brown

Systematics in One Volume

A Theology of the Living Church, by L. Harold DeWolf; Harper and Brothers, New York; 1953; 383 pp., $5.00.

Dr. DeWolf, professor of systematic theology at Boston University and author of *The Religious Revolt Against Reason*, has undertaken to present a complete systematic theology in one volume. His position may be characterized as liberalism modified by some of the insights of neo-orthodoxy and related contemporary thought.

The author begins by setting forth the presuppositions of a Christian theology. He defines systematic theology as "the critical discipline devoted to discovering, expounding, and defending the more important truths implied in the experience of the Christian community" (p. 18). The primary data of the theologian are the Bible, the history of Christianity, and "the present religious experience of himself and others" (p. 20). Because the experiences and problems of the Christian community are not isolated from those of others, theology moves into areas also occupied by philosophy, psychology, social and natural science, as well as biblical studies, history of doctrine, etc.

The role of reason occupies three chapters in this opening section. Dr. DeWolf

disavows the possibility of absolute rational proof of essential articles of Christian faith—just as there is no proving the basic presuppositions of science or logic. But he insists that reason is required to receive revelation, to make a personal judgment as to when revelation has occurred, to interpret and apply revealed truth, and to transmit revealed truth to others. He maintains the necessity of faith in a world where absolute certainty is impossible and compares the various familiar arguments that support the theistic position which was taken for granted in the Christian church.

The second major division of the book considers the place of the Bible. Having defined revelation as "any activity of God by which truth is disclosed to human persons" (p. 33), the author now draws the line between general and special revelation not according to the degree of immediacy or directness of disclosure but on the basis of that which is most instructive or meaningful, most distinctly perceived, and most richly compressed within a single tradition (pp. 65–67). Against this background he discusses the fallibility, the inspiration, and the authority of the Bible.

Part Three, entitled "God and the World," considers the classic problems of God's unity, absolute being, power and knowledge, holiness, transcendence, providence, miracles, and the problem of evil. The next section deals with "Man"—his origin and nature, freedom, sin, and immortality. The concluding sections deal respectively with "Christ and Reconciliation" (including the doctrines of the Holy Spirit, the Trinity, Judgment, and the New Birth), and "The Kingdom and the Church."

There are a number of features that commend this work. It is helpful to have within one volume a comprehensive and systematic discussion of the common beliefs of Christians. This is especially true since there is throughout a remarkable balance in the exploration of issues and a "common sense" that corrects distorted or misleading interpretations of central truths.

The analysis of the function of reason in reference to revelation, the discussion of the self-limitation of God in connection with the problem of evil, and the defense of infant baptism (in an otherwise "low" interpretation of the sacraments) are only a few examples of passages which merit attention. The treatment manifests a practical concern for a vital spiritual life and a sense of the social relevance of Christian truth. Withal, there is a brevity, simplicity and lucidity of expression that encourages the hope that thoughtful lay people, including church school teachers, may read it or refer to it and find it helpful.

At the same time, there are questions that suggest themselves to the reader. At the outset a distinction is drawn between systematic theology and philosophy of religion (the latter being regarded as "a critical search for truth in all the religions of the world"), yet from time to time one is led to ask whether the material and the method are not philosophical rather than theological. "Theistic thought" is bracketed with the Scriptural testimony and the experience of the Church and sometimes (as on page 231) one reads "theist" where he would expect to find the word "Christian."

While the balanced treatment of the limitation and function of reason says some things that are overlooked by theologians who place faith and reason in absolute opposition, one has the feeling that the Christian revelation is not sufficiently acknowledged as the starting point and criterion rather than the object of judgment. One can sympathize with Professor DeWolf's impatience with paradox, reflected in a comment on Pascal (p. 197f.). Yet granting the importance of distilling from experience as much rational coherence as possible, there are aspects of life and faith which don't quite fit into a fully consistent formula.

So, too, following the discussion of sin, one would welcome a fuller treatment of the grace of God. While Christ is represented as the *Revealer* of God, His purpose and His Kingdom, it is not quite clear what God *did* in Christ. Unacceptable theories of the atonement are criticized. "Reconciliation" is recommended as a more satisfactory interpretation of the work of Christ. But the implications of reconciliation and redemption might have been explored in more dynamic terms.

These questions do not minimize the value of the book. It is important for theologians to relate their interpretation of Christianity to the problems with which philosophers are dealing. Our concern is that some of the distinctive notes recovered by recent theological inquiry should not be neglected in the process of integration and systematization.

Huber F. Klemme

Healing Witness

Beyond Anxiety, by James Pike; Charles Scribner's Sons, New York; 1953; 149 pp., $2.75.

Beyond Anxiety consists of a series of sermons preached by the Dean in the New York Cathedral. They are no ordinary sermons. Both the unity of the theme and the skillful application of the main tenets of the Christian faith to the actual problems of human beings as they face frustration, temptation, and anxiety, mark the book as exceptional and establish the author as one of the most skillful and resourceful of modern preachers. This book is not in the category of Liebman's *Peace of Mind* or Sheen's *Peace of Soul.* It deals realistically with the problems of life and makes use of the best psychiatric knowledge as well as of Scriptural truth. One may wish that the book will have wide reading and that it will teach many a parson how to be relevant without being topical in terms of the week's news.

Reinhold Niebuhr

HERE IS THE STIRRING RECORD OF "ONE OF THE TRUE MARTYR SPIRITS OF OUR DAY."

—Reinhold Niebuhr

Prisoner for God

By Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Author of

The Cost of Discipleship

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was one of the most resolute and courageous witnesses to Christ against Nazi tyranny. In April, 1943, he was imprisoned by the Nazis; two years later, he was executed. Published in England under the title *Letters and Papers from Prison,* this book is a collection of his writings while in confinement. Filled with inspiration and his brilliant reflections on a new theology, these writings form an extraordinary, moving document which will bring hope and stimulating ideas to all who work for Christianity. $2.50

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CHRISTIAN ACTION ANNOUNCES

two important events . . .

1. The next issue of Christianity and Society:

In answer to many requests for information regarding Christian Action from the readers of this journal, we are devoting the article space of the next issue to a complete description of the purpose and program of Christian Action. Watch for the spring issue, volume 19, number 2, and let us hear your reactions.

2. The National Conference of Christian Action:

The dates of this year's annual study conference have been set for September 9–11, 1954. The meeting will be held in the Washington, D. C. area. Mark those dates on your calendar now and plan to be on hand in Washington to study current social trends and the task of Christian Action. The program and leaders for this conference will be announced later.

IN THE MEANTIME . . .

Why not take this opportunity to join Christian Action if you have not already done so; or send an extra contribution to help us strengthen and expand our work. Please use the attached coupon in making your gift.

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☐ Please bill me for membership for the remainder of this year (through August 31).*

☐ I enclose $..... as a contribution. This is intended to include my membership fee.

☐ I enclose $..... as my special gift to the work of Christian Action.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____

* Membership rates for a full year: $5.00—single member; $7.50—couples; $2.00—student members.